

REMARKS

Applicant has carefully reviewed and considered the Office Action mailed on August 28, 2003, and the references cited therewith.

Claims 2, 4-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23-25, 28-32, 34-41 and 43 are amended; claims 1, 20 and 33 are canceled. No new claims are added. As a result, claims 2-19, 21-32 and 34-43 are now pending in this application.

Objections to the Drawings

The objections to the drawings are noted. Corrected formal drawings addressing the Draftsman's concerns will be submitted upon receipt of a Notice of Allowance.

§112 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is believed to be moot in view of the amendments to the claims presented herein.

§102 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-4, 20, 23, 25-29, 32-33 and 36 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Dearth et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,732,247). This rejection is believed to be moot in view of the amendments to the claims presented herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 21-22, 24, 30-31, 34-35 and 37-43 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 4-19 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 USC § 112 set forth in the Office Action.

Claims 4-19 were rewritten such that claims 4, 6, 17 and 19 are in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. At the same time, Applicant corrected the indefiniteness noted by the Examiner.

Claims 21-22, 24, 30-31, 34-35 and 37-43 were rewritten such that claims 21, 24, 30, 31, 34, 41 and 43 are in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The remaining pending claims are dependent on the new independent claims.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 373-6909 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743

Respectfully submitted,

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By their Representatives,

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Date

January 28, 2004

By

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 28 day of January, 2004.

Candis B. Buending

Name

Signature

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